

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-07
NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00
/059 W

-----091116Z 010774 /22

R 090822Z APR 77
FM USMISSION NATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2793
SECDEF WASHDC
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 2093

EO11652 GDS
TAGS NATO OCON MILI AWACS
SUBJECT NATO AEW

REF A. STATE 78248 DTG 072236Z APR 77; B. USNATO 2092
DTG 090817Z APR 77; C. BONN 6215 DTG 071822Z APR 77.

1. PURSUANT REF A AND IN ABSENCE OF FRG PERMREP PAULS WHO IS ON LEAVE UNTIL ABOUT APRIL 18, DCM CONVEYED US VIEWS ON TIMING OF THE NATO AEW PROGRAM TO FRG CHARGE BOSS. IN RESPONSE, BOSS SAID (A) FRG BELIEVES A FRESH MILITARY EVALUATION OF THE AEW REQUIREMENT IS NEEDED TO DETERMINE THE SCOPE OF THE PROGRAM IN LIGHT OF THE UK DECISION TO BUY NIMROD; AND (B) FRG COULD NOT PARTICIPATE SUBSTANTIALLY IN FUNDING UNTIL THE EARLY 1980S. THEREFORE, HE DOUBTED FRG COULD MEET A SCHEDULE CALLING FOR A DECISION BY JULY 1 AND PARLIAMENTARY APPROVAL BY THE END OF THIS YEAR. HE ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT REPORTS THAT UK WOULD EXPECT NATO TO PAY FOR THE NIMROD - AWACS INTERFACE. MOREOVER, HE THOUGHT ALLIES NEEDED TO CONSIDER FURTHER THE COST OF AEW INTERFACE WITH THE GROUND ENVIRONMENT.

2. REFERRING TO REUTERS ITEM REPORTING THAT THE FRG IS SEEKING A MEETING OF THE INDEPENDENT EUROPEAN PROGRAM
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GROUP (IEPG) TO RE-EXAMINE AEW (REF B), BOSS NOTED THAT THE PRINCIPAL FRG OBJECTIVE WAS TO SEEK TO ELICIT FRENCH PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAM.

3. COMMENT. AMBASSADOR STRAUSSZ-HUPE PLANS TO DISCUSS FRG VIEWS ON AEW WITH PAULS AS SOON AS THE LATTER RETURNS TO BRUSSELS. MEANWHILE, WE BELIEVE EMBASSY BONN SHOULD CONTINUE ITS PROBING AT HIGHEST APPROPRIATE LEVELS, INCLUDING WITH LEBER, WHO WE UNDERSTAND WILL RETURN ABOUT APRIL 18 FROM VACATION.

4. WE ALSO AGREE WITH EMBASSY BONN (PARA 5, REF C)
THAT THE NATO ASPECT SHOULD BE EMPHASIZED IN AWACS
DEMONSTRATIONS HELD IN EUROPE.

5. IN A MORE GENERAL VEIN:

A. LEBER'S APPARENT INITIATIVE REGARDING NATO AEW SEEMS A
FAVORABLE SIGN.

B. IEPG INVOLVEMENT MIGHT BE HELPFUL WITH THE
FRENCH, BUT AT THE SAME TIME THE FRG MAY BE LINING UP
ITS EUROPEAN PARTNERS TO CREATE A HEAVIER EUROPEAN COUNTER-
WEIGHT IN FORTHCOMING AWACS NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE US.

C. WE BELIEVE THAT THE FRG HAS IN MIND AN EFFECTIVE
20 PERCENT COST SHARE OF A COMBINED NIMROD-AWACS
PROGRAM, IN DOLLAR TERMS ROUGHLY \$490 MILLION. LEBER
ADVANCED THE 20 PERCENT FIGURE ILLUSTRATIVELY AT THE
MINISTERIAL DPC ON MARCH 25. WE BELIEVE THAT THIS TENTATIVE
BID WILL BE THE FRG OPENING POSITION IN ANY NEW ROUND OF
NEGOTIATIONS ON COST SHARES.

D. FINALLY, WE DOUBT THE FRG WILL SHOW FLEXIBILITY ON A
PAYMENT SCHEDULE THAT ENVISAGES HEAVY FRG OUTLAYS BEFORE THE
EARLY 1980S. END COMMENT. STRAUSZ-HUPE
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 30-Aug-1999 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 09-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977NATO02093
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: n/a
Format: TEL
From: NATO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197704102/baaabcwp.tel
Line Count: 87
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Message ID: 5af7b39b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2665624
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CHANGED> MCM 20040809
Subject: SUBJECT NATO AEW
TAGS: MILI
To: STATE SECDEF MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/5af7b39b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009